PASTORAL LIFE

A PUBLICATION FOR PRIESTS

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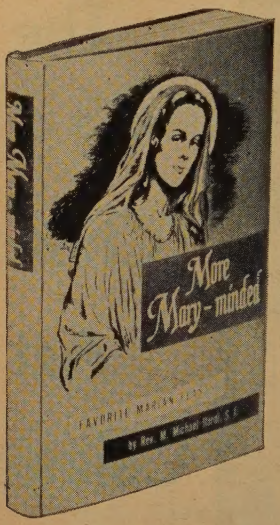

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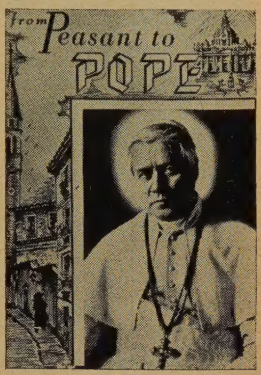

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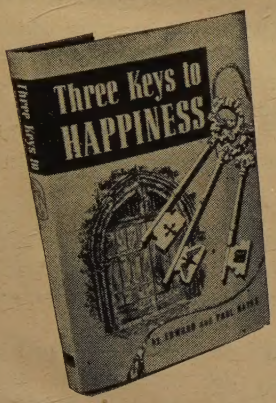

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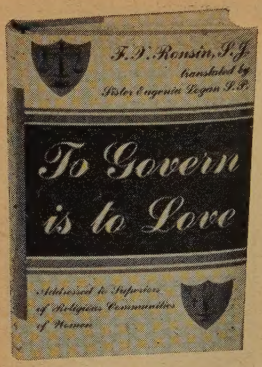
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• PASTORAL LIFE •

VOL. II, No. 4 July - August, 1954

Religion And Mental Health

Rev. William F. Allen, d.c.l.

THE average priest or layman knows little about the theory and practice of psychiatry and is quite willing to withhold his assent either for or against many of its tenets. Both are very much interested in exploring the mind and the secrets of human behaviour. In a previous article it was pointed out that our present Holy Father commended psychiatry for the possibilities of good that it holds out to suffering humanity; however, there was an admonition to the science to be mindful of its own limitations and respectful of certain fundamental religious truths. Yes, discerning we must be in our reading and appraisal in the matter and content of psychiatry for we meet on many points a common ground in theology and the ministry of the Catholic confessional. For all of that we must not *a priori* deprecate such and such a theory in that field. Indeed it would be a mistake not to give mature consideration to some features therein which may, someday, contribute much to the understanding and guidance of souls. Progress is being made in unravelling the effects of a complex and fast civilization on humanity! And, in evaluating the thoughts of others we more intensely appreciate what we have and what we hope for, particularly when we discover that others feel the need of our beliefs but are not quite ready to properly situate them in their own perspective.

Father Allen, a former professor of Theology and Canon Law, now is the Chaplain of Farren Memorial Hospital in Montague City, Mass.

Religion and Life

Religion places an active part in our everyday life. Peace of soul

and peace of mind are by-words today and they involve the thought of God, of Religion, of Morality. However, in practice these goals are sought in things foreign to, or even opposed to God and His works. There is then, that danger, in practical life of concluding that God and Religion are not made for the comfort and solace of man but rather to distress man! From a misconception and a misapplication of Religion follows disappointment and also the charge that Religion begets or at least aggravates mental trouble! Yes, Religion is mightily involved in all struggles of the soul of man but we must insist that the correct notion and appreciation of its tenets be given to man so that he may reap its advantages.

As we will point out later, the voice of conscience takes a great toll today in human living since peace is sought so frequently in things of sin, and emotional distress abounds because the moral mentor within man is totally ignored. Failure to appreciate the nature and role of conscience in a person's life will inevitably lead the non-believer to an unfortunate decision and outlook on the patient's troubles.

Fear and Guilt

Today, so much stress is placed on the integral man in his physical, mental, spiritual abilities! The total personality of man is the subject of this serious business of present-day living. Thus the grace of God is necessary for the religious person under this aspect of totality that he may enjoy the tranquillity of peace. All the more so, because adverse circumstances of life do not make that peace obtainable. Yes, it is difficult to live without God and Religion and I suppose that is the reason why Religion and Psychiatry interweave a pattern, common in many things, for the study and direction of human beings. Is there an uneasiness in this common study of mankind by these two forces?

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The first uneasiness may be found on the subject of fear and guilt. They are laid at the doorstep of Religion for their origin in many cases. Some accuse us of fashioning unfortunate impressions in the minds of people on points of religious doctrines. We can admit the possibility and probability of this procedure. Despair could well be aroused in some souls, fear and guilt also to an abnormal degree (especially in souls who by temperament are given to severe introspection and stern, self-judgments) by overly-drawn, outrageously vivid pictures of interpretation of sin, of the intensity of the fires of hell, the horror of a sacrilegious communion. But these are not the rule of religious teaching. When they do occur where is the blame to be placed? Should it go to Religion or to the purveyor and the recipient for their own personal approach? Here, we have no real, basic condemnation of Religion in itself but only the way in which it is conveyed by exception. We admit that a monition to prudence and caution in regard to this matter, is not without value to those engaged in the pastoral ministry.

A more fundamental objection on this score goes to the very essence of Religion. We are reproached with the sense of sin and its punishment, the fear and shame instilled in the sinner. This appears very inhuman to the non-believer dealing with guilt-complexes. He would have a sinless religion and ethics wherein sin would be considered only as misguided conduct without any threat of punishment or of retribution. To him, the sinner is envisaged as weighed down with guilt, fear, shame, unworthiness, without redress before an unmerciful God. Sin, to him, is an insurmountable difficulty without release or hope or remedy of bringing mental torture and emotional death to its victim. Does this correspond to true reality?

Pardon ... Release

Normal attitudes in any religion are the sense of guilt with the sense of sin. Where there is the presence and belief in a God, there too must be the sense of sin. When a dependent creature turns away from his God willingly and wilfully, he finds himself in an anomalous situation: he loves and wishes that God as his supreme good and yet he finds himself leaving God for something ephemeral, limited, soon to be loathesome. Upon mature reflection, the soul will be in anguish. As Pope Pius XII wrote "to the transcendent relations of the psychic being there belongs also the sense of guilt, the consciousness of having violated a higher law, by which, nevertheless one, recognizes oneself as being bound, a consciousness which can find expression in suffering and in psychic disorder." Real guilt will stem

from a real moral fault not yet wiped away by the contrition in the heart of the sinner and absolution of the priest in confession. Religion does not abandon the sinner in his moral misery rather it opens up the way to peace and to pardon, and the history of the Church attests to the fact that the greatest sinners have become the most loved of saints. Sin and guilt could not possibly be abnormal since there is always a release from them.

Fear and Guilt; Mercy and Love

The release of the sinner from his guilt and fear is indeed a heart-warming and confidence-laden process. First of all, the Church has always insisted on the full consent of the will in the creature for a mortal sin and has taught that the fire of passion in the human heart might easily destroy or diminish that consent. It is therefore not easy to be guilty of spiritual death in the eyes of God or of the Church and this particularly in a person afflicted with spiritual anxieties. But, presuming that all conditions for mortal sin are verified, Religion offers to man a sure pledge of forgiveness and reinstatement in the good graces of God.

Sin and guilt are but correlatives of mercy and love. The debt of the sinner has already been borne by Christ, the Crucified. Our iniquity has been accepted and expiated by the God made Man — even before we or our iniquity were a reality! And to obtain the saving effects of this expiation, all that is required is a change of heart and an attempt to conform our will to His wise directives in the future. An attempt that can be made not once, not seven times, but seventy times seven according to Christ Himself. Certainly, rightly understood, this doctrine should be the antidote, not the bane, for all fragile, weak, drooping human hearts! Where then in such a doctrine could we find the seeds of abnormal, morbid fear and guilt of mental torture and emotional death? Rather the opposite is true.

Guilt and Conscience

Seeking the basis of that fear and guilt in the sinner, psychiatry decries the insistence on these entities in Religion and then turns its attention to the enforcement agent, conscience. However, we must note immediately, that its concept of conscience and our traditional doctrine thereon are not the same: its nature differs entirely one from the other although it is interesting and instructive to make a comparison of both and to seek out a possible interweaving in one and the same person.

First of all, for clarity's sake let us propose the Catholic concept of conscience. It is the crux of man's personality, this conscience, because by it man determines, guides, directs self in a moral sense.

Whether he likes it or not, man is a chartered unit and destined for a supernatural port to which he will successfully make his way through the doing of good and the avoiding of evil. For that purpose, God has given to man's intellect the function in the moral order of warning him about good and evil, of commanding that the good be done, of prodding man to repentance when he disobeys the imperative. On the other hand, conscience will give man peace and tranquillity for acquiescence to its dictates. Since conscience is a function of the intellect, it applies knowledge to concrete actions of life with a decidedly vocal command, leaving no doubt in the individual as to his course of conduct. Such a sure moral guide is indeed a human asset.

Conflict-Conscience?

Could it be a source of conflict, of mental distress? Surely not from its imperative, the ability to command, to guide man. However, its command must be founded on true facts and correct knowledge, else its judgments will be wrong, misleading and we could run into trouble on that score. The knowledge must be acquired by the personal effort of the individual and will vary according to his age, level of education, moral culture, etc. It will be basic, objective knowledge obtained by reflections on the Law of God, the directives of the Church, the wisdom of those skilled in ethics and moral guidance.

These norms are for the person a "personalist" ethics for he must make them his own, apply them to his own actions in all their peculiar circumstances, and make his own judgment as to their influence on those actions. It is a very intimately personal function, this applying of the imperative of conscience. We note that it is of the intellectual as well as of the affective life of man; we note too, that the development of conscience is a lifetime job since there is always something new to be learned, some finer precision to be taken into account. The imperative of conscience is given us by nature, but the content we must labor hard to acquire and it must be acquired by personal effort and application to be valid. And we are reminded always by the Church that we are to be ultimately judged on a very personal basis — that of our sincere, objective conscience and its dictum.

In operation, then, conscience must evaluate the potentiality of the action under consideration to lead the individual toward his final destiny, God, or away from Him. And this evaluation must take place on a rational basis: concepts of the moral law as he knows and understands it. We make note of all these details because they stand out in sharp contrast with the notion of the super ego— 'conscience' in a psychiatric sense.

The Super Ego

Psychiatry has substituted in many cases for the above conscience-theory, another word and theory, namely, the *super ego.* It is totally different from our traditional notion of conscience. The imperative and content of the super ego in no way are correlative. Freud invented the word and the entity. How? Pondering over severe cases of guilt, scrupulosity, depression and of overly-self abasement, Freud was led to consider the formative stages of moral growth in the child. Just how did he get ideas of right and wrong? He discerned that the child conceives right and wrong, not on a rational basis, neither on a personal one but rather he imbibes, absorbs all that from his parents and elders especially in the tender years of two to four in childhood. He assumes the attitudes, morals, opinions, taboos, prohibitions of his parents because of his respect and reverence for the parents. A thing is good or bad because they say so. And a pressure is created in the child to make him accept all these moral directives: he will be rejected, made to feel guilty, unworthy, inadequate by his parents should he fail to observe them. And this pressure is particularly created in the child's affective life.

So here we have the origin of the moral content, and of an imperative enforcing the content. But says Freud, it is all imposed from the exterior by others; it is an entirely non-personal, irrational approach to morals. It is just a self-ideal proposed and forced in the child, to which he feels he must tend, even though it does not represent what he would have himself be, or what he would desire to be, in many circumstances. Lament do they the fact that this human moral mentor always works on the instinctive human drives of love and aggression in an atmosphere of repression and of stern severity. Freud would have it that we never lose that self-ideal of childhood, the super ego, and though it be senseless and foolish, it still is the source of undue torment for many adults and from it spring all these morbid feelings of guilt, fear, dreadful retribution, etc.

Different but Useful?

There is no need to insist upon the different make-up of conscience and the super ego. On the one hand we have a function of the intellect, inborn as to imperative and commanding quality, working on objective knowledge, and applied in a very personal, rational manner. The knowledge must be based on the Ten Commandments, the directive of the Church, the wisdom of those skilled in things of the soul. The goal of the application is to please Almighty God and merit His favor of eternal salvation. This is a life-time job. On the other hand, we have the affective

life of the person involved, working on an imperative instilled by human beings into another helpless human being, a child and concepts of right and wrong, attitudes implanted in the same child and all this endures from childhood to adulthood without any basis, objective or rational, for human conduct directives.

But can we learn something from this fantastic creation of the super ego? Does it shed any light upon the interpretation of human behaviour? Dr. Hayden, O.S.B. recommends it to our consideration since it does present an objective picture of the early development in the moral life of the child when the latter cannot be trained otherwise. The child is indoctrinated morally by others as he is in other fields of conduct regulation. His urges must be curbed and directed for his own good and the safety of others. In curbing them, parents do implant in him the notion of fault, guilt, unworthiness, etc. We can see the possibility of future personality conflicts arising from this very early training. An urge could be misdirected and misguided and perverted. If such a manifestation of an urge were all-important for acceptance in his home in childhood, that same manifestation might endure as an ideal all during life when it could not possibly be lived and attained. And this striving for the impossible could drive a person to dubiously-moral behaviour and involve questions of true conscience as we will see in the practical cases at the end of this article.

Again, there is a possibility of inter-relationship of the super ego and conscience arising from the introduction of the child to the real moral code as enforced by conscience and this to lead him to his eternal destiny. There comes a time when he must judge his actions according to the normal of God, the Church, Moralists. No longer will parent-imbibed morals be acceptable to conscience as its norm. There is a transition to be made in his moral life and what if the child does not make it? He will insist on being guided still by the emotional content of the super ego and of course, will run into trouble. Writes Dr. Hayden: "Sad to say there are too many of us who reflect the conscience of our parents or superiors and pattern our lives according to their standards and sense of moral rectitude rather than the objective standards of morality which we must come to know and to embrace."

Finally, the two — conscience and super ego — may conflict in the area of guilt. The child had certain actions judged, marked, condemned for four years by the super ego and this before his introduction to conscience and the real moral code. He had already felt shame, guilt, etc., on many points. Now, if conscience and the moral code must attach another sense of guilt to the same actions

trouble may ensue: the double guilt, true, moral, plus the emotional, may mount to such a degree that the resonance may become abnormal and difficult to handle.

I suppose that accounts for the remark of very reputable psychiatrists, to the effect of each of us possessing in our moral conscience a small part of the super ego and that unless we understand it and control it, and bring it under the influence of true conscience, it may become a source of crippling inhibitions, cruel prejudicies, irrational, morbid guilt.

Two Examples from Life

Do we find in life interwoven influence of the super ego and conscience? How many refuse to accept mature judgments on moral questions because these differ from what was once learned at school? How many scorn dispensations in laws because these were never given years ago and thus do not seem right?

We can think of a very common case: the young woman driven to the abyss of despair, mentally, by unconscious feelings of guilt engendered by a burning desire of a tempting marriage proposal. She longs to accept it but holds it in abeyance because of a semblance of evil. To terminate a companionship with an aunt who acted as her foster-mother, seems to her the deepest of sins — ingratitude — a fear of and a repulsion to that sin was instilled within her by the aunt from earliest childhood. This coupled with a stern interpretation of the fourth commandment of God precludes any consideration of the marriage. Yet, she yearns for it — and there she stands, conscience disapproving, the super ego disapproving, but her nature and heart approving!

The case of the boy in whom was implanted the super ego, the ideal of always excelling — of being first at school, in all competition. This was a requisite for acceptance and love at home. If he failed, there was shame; and feelings of guilt soon arose. All through his career that attitude persisted and was gratified until the young man in college met with his first bitter disappointment on this score. He found himself inferior to the majority of his classmates who were of a very select group, intellectually speaking. He was deeply grieved, his self-esteem wounded and the super ego clamored aloud bringing serious threats of fear, anguish, with the desire to end all. He had to be removed from school, a victim of hysterical mutism and insensibility. The case was further involved by moral complications: the youthful moral indiscretions returned to make the boy feel rejected by God. He was inferior on all counts. The super ego, his ideal was completely shattered beyond redemption. He was totally no good. It was not until this uncon-

scious mentality of all-or-nothing, a throwback to childhood was faced and understood that the boy returned to school and did very well in all types of school endeavors.

Juvenile Delinquency

A personal problem in a delinquent youth will never be solved until the real deep motivation of the youth is understood. We might look for a serious conflict involving the moral conscience and the super ego. Sometimes an emotional disturbance in a youth's life seeks an outlet in immoral conduct and when the former is solved, the latter of itself becomes unwanted and meaningless.

We are unduly critical of delinquents from splendid backgrounds socially, religiously, educationally. We seem to forget that these youngsters can revolt against the tedious demands of a super ego in that class of society as well as others in a lower bracket. Abnormal feelings of guilt, unworthiness, of emotional distress brought on by disloyalty to a false super ego could be so strong that they drive the young man to forsake a conscience ideal too. Deeply hurt and disappointed, he will adopt a "it-does-not-make-any-difference-now" spirit and his failure will spread from the self-ideal to conscience ideal.

The delinquent from the slums can be a most confused individual. His super ego ideal from the earliest times in a struggle for survival always encouraged the basest and most cruel instincts. At no time was there a transition for him into moral responsibility. True conscience only warned him not to be caught by the authorities. Apprehended and convicted, the youth cannot understand a society in whose tenets and philosophy he had never been trained and to whose goals was never converted. In him was a perverted super ego from his environment but no true moral conscience was ever formed; rather the latter was stifled, could not grow since nothing was offered it in the line of content, of growth, mental or moral.

Pondering over these few cases, we can sense that there is an element of the super-ego that could easily conflict with and involve true moral conscience. In understanding complex human beings, we can ill afford to pass over even the slightest indication of truth!

(Material for this article was taken from the book, "Conflict and Light" edited by Pere Bruno, O.C.D., London 1952. Also, the Bulletin of the Guild of Catholic Psychiatrists for April 1952 and 1953. We note with gratitude the article by Dr. James E. Hayden, O.S.B. of the Catholic University, "The Perspective of a Catholic Psychiatrist", April 1953).

The Priest, the Laity and the 100 Million Non-church Goers!

Rev. Edward F. Garesché, s.j.

Recently I was talking with some non-Catholic people who are engaged in a very appealing charity. What their religious knowledge or convictions are did not appear in our conversation, but that they are earnest, zealous, self-sacrificing is clear enough from the work they are doing and the way they are doing it. This little group is only one of hundreds of such groups all through the land who are sincere, earnest, charitable, but who have never received the gift of the Faith, have indeed never been invited to study the Catholic teachings.

Many of them never go to church. It is said that 30 million baptized American Christians do not regularly attend church services. Seventy million have never belonged to a religious denomination and many of them are not even baptized. Thus one hundred million of our fellow citizens, many of them with a sincere desire to serve God and to help others, are living in a country where more than 30 million of their fellow citizens are Catholic, yet they have less personal contact with the Catholic Church than if they were members of a tribe in the wilds of Africa to which a missionary would come and give them at least one talk on Catholic doctrine and invite them to learn and believe in the teachings of Christ.

Ours is a wonderful country and with wonderful people. Those who read the lurid and sensational crime stories of the yellow press and who hear the number of teenage delinquents may forget the great, strong, solid majority of the people of the United States. Among these are many who are God-fearing people, who want to do what is right. Some of these would be

excellent Catholics if they only had the opportunity to learn something about the Catholic religion, if they were only invited, in a cordial way, to study and accept the Church's teachings.

At the present time a constant trickle, so to say, of conversions comes into the Church. Something over 100,000 conversions occur every year among adult Americans. This is about 270 a day out of a total non-Catholic population of 125 million. Many of these converts find their way into the Church themselves by reading, study and observation. The great majority of our Catholic people do nothing at all to spread the Faith, indeed they never even think of making conversions. Many of them are very devoted to their own religion. They are glad to be Catholics and would not for the world give up this treasure of Catholic belief and practice. How strange that they do nothing at all to give to worthy, well meaning people such as those with whom I have just been speaking, the treasure of the Faith!

Many good Catholics, in their own minds shift the burden of spreading the Faith, of making converts, to the shoulders of the priests, the Sisters and the Brothers. If anyone does make an inquiry, which is rare, they say "Why don't you talk to a priest about that? He will give you the information you need." To be well informed in their Catholic Faith, armed with clear and telling explanations and proofs of what they believe, this does not occur to them. Those who have studied the catechism in their school days have, in many cases, never added at all to their knowledge of the Faith. Many of them hardly ever read a Catholic book or indeed even a Catholic paper. And all the while 100 million fellow citizens are waiting for the kind word, the bit of Catholic literature that may be their first invitation to study and embrace the true Faith.

We, who have never known what it means to be uncertain in matters of religion, who have never had to seek for the truth because we were born in a Catholic family and educated in Catholic surroundings, can hardly understand what is the plight of many of those good and earnest people. Through no fault of theirs they were born in very different surroundings to those in which we saw the light of day. Many American families have drifted far away from the Church to which their forebears belonged. They still retain much of the decency and right principles of Christianity. It is a wonder they are as good as they are. We, who have the Sacraments, the fullness of the Faith, the power of prayer, the light of Catholic teaching and all the graces which come from membership in the true Church still find it hard enough at times to be good and honest and pure. Since they do so much with so little, since many of them do live clean

and pure lives, deal justly with their fellow beings and, like this group with which I have just been speaking, give time and energy to good works, what would they be and what would they accomplish if they had the light and strength of the fullness of the Catholic faith and practice? It is a pity that so many good people have no contact with the Catholic Church!

Cooperation of the Laity

The great hope of reaching and converting many of these 100 million rests, as matters now stand, with Catholic lay folk. We can perhaps better realize the potential power of the Catholic lay apostolate when we consider how really strange and false principles are spread by those who correspond to our Catholic laity. The phenomenon of the Jehovah Witnesses, the almost incomprehensible growth and power of this sect, is due entirely to what we would call lay workers, because obviously they have no clergy, in the right sense of the word, yet this strange belief has grown and spread in our country to a remarkable degree and from the mission lands come reports that it is reaching out far over the world. It is said that fallen away Catholics sometimes become Jehovah Witnesses and whereas when they were Catholics they did nothing at all to spread the true Faith, once indoctrinated with these fantastic beliefs they become bold as lions and active to a remarkable degree, sacrificing themselves and working to spread literature and teaching the doctrines of this false religion so antagonistic to the Catholic Church.

We know that Communism has spread through the nation through the misdirected zeal and extraordinary self-sacrifice of its promoters, who give up everything and devote themselves with fanatic singleness of purpose to spreading this deadly cancer of atheism and hatred.

If a considerable number of our Catholic people would become as active and self-sacrificing and persevering in their efforts to spread the true Faith as the poor dupes of these new systems are in spreading their deplorable errors, great numbers of conversions would be made in America.

If anyone thinks that this task can be left to priests and Sisters and Brothers, let him reflect for a moment that the 150,000 Catholic Sisters in the United States, the 45,000 priests and the 10,000 Brothers are almost all engaged in the spiritual and educational apostolates of the Catholic people. Very few of them indeed are explicitly working for the conversion of the 100 million non-church goers in our midst. The great number of parishes needed to supply Catholics with the opportunities of hearing Mass and receiving the Sacraments require the services of the far greater number of all the priests in

the country and even so there are not enough.

The many Catholics schools — grade schools, high schools, colleges, universities, professional and vocational schools — demand a vast staff of Brothers, Sisters and priests. The immense system of Catholic hospitals are never sufficiently staffed by the Sisters and Brothers who conduct them.

Yet with all this effort great numbers of Catholics fall away every year. Surveys made of many Catholics parishes show a deplorable number of couples whose marriages have not been properly solemnized, of children who have not been baptized. A recent report from the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine showed that little more than 4 million of our Catholic children are in Catholic educational institutions, though these are very crowded with students. Six million more, the report went on, are in non-Catholic schools of various kinds. More remarkable still is the fact that the very Catholic children who would profit more by attending Catholic schools are going to non-Catholic institutions because the families where the Faith is not well taught and lived at home, are often the families from which the children are sent to non-Catholic schools.

There is no great prospect therefore in the foreseeable future, of taking enough priests, Brothers and Sisters from our schools, hospitals and other institutions to reach any great number of the 100 million non-church goers. But we have a Catholic layman for every 3 or 4 of these needy ones and if the Catholic men and women and even the boys and girls were made active and interested in the spread of the Faith it would be a comparatively short time before the whole nation had received at least an opportunity of learning about the Catholic Faith.

Organized Effort

If anyone says that the Catholic people of the United States will not respond to the invitation to become convert makers and spreaders of the Faith, we think he speaks rashly. What is needed is an organized effort, especially on the part of priests, Sisters and Brothers to enlist the laity in spreading the Faith, in instructing and inviting as many as possible of the 100 million to become and remain good members of the Catholic Church.

We have millions of potential convert makers among the Catholic people of the United States. If each of these millions of zealous apostolic workers would make contact with one non-Catholic a week, less than a year would be needed to reach all the 100 million. But, someone may say, "This is a utopian dream." Who can suggest any way to enlist a million Catholics, or even 100,000 in a systematic effort to tell the 100 million non-church goers of the claims, the

beauty, the truth, the holiness and the saving power of the Catholic Church? What plan have you to offer? It is all very well to speak of the need, but how can it be met practically?

We think we have an answer, but it is so simple, so obvious and easy that many to whom we have communicated it belittle it and do nothing at all to carry it into practice. Yet where it has been tried out it has been richly fruitful and it is simple that anyone with the use of reason and a few pennies at his or her disposal can take it up and carry it through successfully.

This is what we call the *Crusade of the Leafleteers,* a personal, individual apostolate which consists in securing some of the simple and small leaflets printed by the Vista Maria Press (8 West 17th Street, New York City) and spreading them about in every practicable and tactful way. These leaflets now cover 90 topics, carefully chosen, most of them directly intended to interest non-Catholics and induce them to learn more about the Catholic Church and its teachings. These leaflets can be had for 5 for 1c., in lots of 1000 (or $2.00 per thousand) from the address mentioned above.

All one has to do is to leave them in a public place, to hand them out on the street corner, put them in a telephone booth and the natural curiosity of the passersby will induce them to take one and read it through.

Already nearly 30 million of these leaflets have been printed and distributed but this is only about one leaflet for every four of the 100 million. The leafleteers who engaged in this apostolate have found it very interesting, easy and profitable. Many conversions were made and many a prejudiced mind and heart enlightened with the truth about the Catholic teaching. But comparatively few of the laity have so far become leafleteers. Many millions more of these leaflets are put in the hands of some of those 100 million people who otherwise have no hope or expectation, as matters now are, of any contact with the Catholic Church, even if they live to be a hundred years old.

These leaflets break down the barriers between mind and mind. They convey to the one who received and reads them the realization that the Catholic Church is universal in its charity and its potential membership invites all to study and accept its teachings, loves and seeks to save every soul which God has made.

Whether this method is used or some other, let us all pray and work to do away with this sad situation in our country, let us try to reach and help to enlighten and to convert the millions of good people, well meaning, earnest and utterly ignorant of the treasures which Christ has stored up for them in His One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

A Grave Obligation

The Apostle Paul said: "Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel," thereby indicating that the first duty of all those who are entrusted in any way with the government of the Church is to instruct the faithful in the things of God. . . .

Here then it is well to emphasize and insist that for a priest there is no duty more grave or obligation more binding than this. Who, indeed, will deny that knowledge should be joined to holiness of life in the priest? "For the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge." The church demands this knowledge of those who are to be ordained to the priesthood. Why? Because the Christian people expect from them knowledge of the divine law, and it was for that end that they were sent by God." . . .

If what We have just said is applicable to all priests, does it not apply with much greater force to those who possess the title and the authority of parish priests, and who, by virtue of their rank and in a sense by virtue of a contract, hold the office of pastors of souls? These are, to a certain extent, the pastors and teachers appointed by Christ in order that, the faithful might not be as "children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine devised in the wickedness of men," but that, "practising the truth in love," they may, "grow up in all things in Him who is the head, Christ."

For this reason the Council of Trent treating of the duties of pastors of souls decreed that their first and most important work is the instruction of the faithful. It therefore prescribes that they shall teach the truths of religion on Sundays, on the more solemn feast days, and during the holy seasons of Advent and Lent. . . .

Now, if we cannot expect to reap a harvest when no seed has been planted, how can we hope to have a people with morals if Christian doctrine has not been imparted to them in due time?

From "Acerbo Nimis" by St. Pius X.

The Priest in the Confessional

Rev. Gerard Kelly, s.j.

THE young confessor is filled with a tremedous awe when he finds himself in the place of God and privileged to know the deepest secrets of the human heart. He is consoled by the return of the sinner, inspired by the confession of the saint, and elated by those occasional experiences that manifest in an almost tangible manner that he is the instrument of the Holy Spirit. In a word, the young priests finds the confessional attractive, and he undertakes this ministry with sincere enthusiasm. He wants to be a good confessor. He resolves to keep up his study of moral theology, canon law, and ascetical theology not only by repeated application to his textbooks, but also by earnest discussions and by the regular reading of good periodicals.

The Drabness of It

Most priests find that they cannot preserve this enthusiasm without effort. After a few years dragging tendecies begin to show themselves. Like other holy things, the confessional can become monotonous, even distasteful. The time for hearing confessions comes around with a boring regularity; it interferes with "other work"; it deprives one of pleasant recreations. Long lines of penitents sap one's energy; intervals between confessions fray one's nerves. Listening to the repetition of big sins provokes a sort of disgust, and on the other hand the frequent recital of small sins appears very drab.

Such are the dragging tendencies. Any priest might experience one or more of them. If he gives in to such tendencies, he is apt

Father Kelly, had originally written these reflections for "Alter Christus", a periodical published by the League of Sacerdotal Sanctity, now discontinued. The article was recently reprinted in "His Heart In Our Work", edited by Francis L. Filas, S.J. Bruce, $3.75.

to look upon the ministry of hearing confessions as "just another job." He will begrudge the time spent in the confessional and will neglect preparation for it. That high-minded resolve to keep up his studies will first become a mere ve'leity, then disappear entirely. The zealous apostle of a few years ago will become a routine, uninspired, and uninspiring confessor — a dull instrument even in the hands of God.

To counteract these harmful tendencies, we have to make a deliberate effort to preserve and increase our love of the confessional. Hearing confessions does have its unpleasant aspects, and quite naturally if a priest begins to think only of these or too much of these, he will soon lose his zeal for this ministry. The confessional also has its inspiring aspects, and these far outweigh any other considerations. If through meditation we can appreciate and continue to appreciate the supernatural value of the confessional, we shall always be devoted and Christlike confessors. The purpose of these lines is simply to outline certain truths that contain stimulating meditation matter for priests.

Supernatural Considerations

Meditation on the doctrines that pertain to the confessional is very helpful. The meaning of sanctifying grace and its sublime effects in the soul; the reality of the sacraments and their grace-giving power; the special function of the sacrament of penance to destroy sin and its effects, and to implant in the heart a barrier against future sin — these great truths should never become mere words to us. The most ordinary penitent who comes to us with the minimum disposition for a fruitful confession gets something more precious than any earthly treasure when we pronounce the words of absolution. One hundred souls absolved means one hundred souls who have gained or have grown in grace through our ministry. In the light of that truth the weariness, the drabness, the pressure of other work, the loss of recreation, and such things seem very small indeed.

Meaning of the Confessional Respect to Our Lord

Then there is the meaning of the confessional to our Lord. Of course, He never sat in a confessional. But He lived and suffered and died to take away sin and to make grace abound. The most touching of His parables — the Prodigal Son and the Good Shepherd — concern sinners and show us His divine attitude toward them. He took pains to announce to us the great joy in heaven over one sinner doing penance. His miracles were often accomplished with the remitting of sins. In His own personal contacts with the human

Contributions Are Welcome

While the Editors of PASTORAL LIFE shall endeavor to commission appropriately chosen articles from qualified clerical writers, they wholeheartedly invite priests and Religious to share their knowledge and experiences on any pastoral subject that may fall within the scope of this periodical.

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heart, He showed a special love for sinners — as is evidenced by the stories of the woman taken in adultery, of the woman of Samaria, of the good thief, of Peter's denial, and of Thomas' unbelief. But this special love for the "big sinners" did not dull his devotion to the "little sinners," the good people with little faults, whose lives can seem so very drab when one is hunting for the spectacular. He kept patiently instructing the Apostles and trying to purify them more and more of their faults.

Perhaps the best sign of Christ's attitude toward the confessional is found in the story of the first Easter Sunday. After His resurrection His first gift to the Apostles, and through them to us, was the power to forgive sins. Every time we hear a confession we tell again the story of that first Easter and extend to one more soul that blessed peace that is had only in Christ. "My peace I give to you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you. Whose sins you shall forgive. . . ."

Meaning of the Confessional to the Faithful

The meaing of the confessional to the faithful is another source of inspiration. It may be true that some seem to have but little appreciation of the confessor's work and that some are even definitely un-cooperative; but if we consider the faithful as a group, we cannot fail to be impressed by their deep faith in our power and their implicit confidence in us. We learn in our moral theology that the confessor is judge, physician, teacher, and spiritual father. Our penitents may have no explicit knowledge of these various offices, yet in their practical, living faith they attribute all these functions to us. They bring us their sins for judgment, and after our absolution they go forth with unburdened consciences. They show us the wounds of their sins and ask us to bind up these wounds and give them the remedies against future sins. They have doubts, puzzling doubts, and they ask us to solve them. They

grow despondent, and look to us for comfort; and they treasure our kind words as if they came directly from the lips of Christ. Our entire confessional ministry to them is productive of a peace which the rest of the world envies, but does not understand.

The priest who keeps the foregoing or similar truths in mind and continues to be devoted to his confessional ministry will find that it confers no small advantages on him. His knowledge of human nature is deepened as he sees its essential sameness and its almost infinite accidental variations. His outlook on the world is brightened as he turns from the headline recitals of crime to the confessional revelations of heroism and true sanctity of numberless simple lives that are hidden with Christ in God. Even his contact with great sins is in wholesome and encouraging circumstances; for he discovers these sins not in the shocking moment of their commission, but in the moment of humble repentence.

Sanctifying Influence

Deep in his own soul the earnest priest feels especially the sanctifying influence of the confessional. He deals with souls that are weak, and he is led to pray and to sacrifice himself for them. He must encourage others to do difficult things, and he feels that he must practice a similar self-denial. The mistakes of others teach him to avoid like mistakes; the literally terrible temptations of others show him the goodness of God in protecting him; the sanctity of others humbles him and then urges him on to more intense personal efforts. Through it all, there is that ever deepening impression that in these intimate dealings with the human heart he is but the instrument of God and that his work will prosper and bring greater benefits to souls and greater glory to God in proportion to his own union with God, his own likeness to the Christ whom he represents.

We priests have many ministries to perform. All these ministries are good; all must be done. But if we give ourselves wholeheartedly to the ministry of hearing confessions, and if, insofar as it is allowed us to choose, we show a special preference for this ministry, we may be sure that this is the prompting of the Holy Spirit. It is a grace-giving ministry, especially dear to the Heart of Christ, full of meaning to the faithful, and rich in its natural and supernatural compensations for ourselves.

"God grant me the grace to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can — and the wisdom to know the difference."

Hobbies Help Souls to Heaven

Rev. Francis J. Sullivan

A celibate life is a lonely one. Nobody knows this more than the priest, but nobody knows better than he of the many consolations it affords, what might be termed the substitutions that are given him from time to time to help assuage the human and very natural pangs of loneliness which assault him.

Of course there are many answers given to the problem of priestly loneliness, and many remedies — some sane and reasoned, others not — proposed. They range all the way from deepening your spiritual life to collecting postage stamps. Not, mind you, that these suggestions are without worth, nor that I dare suggest — especially for the missionary who, sometimes may find himself with more time on his hands than he knows what to do with (and idleness, as we know, breeds much mischief) — that he refuse to consider these remedies that are offered him. They are good and needful — perhaps even more necessary than, at first, we might be inclined to suppose.

Take Philately for example. What good can collecting stamps do anyone? The answer that immediately pops into mind is: It can capture your interest, diverting you from idle thoughts, which so frequently breed temptation. But, more than this, it can help you in your ministry, it can add to your store of knowledge, provide you with a plentiful store of illustrations for your sermons and instructions.

How can stamp-collecting do this?

Well, take a look at a postage stamp — any stamp will do. What is it? I mean, besides being a piece of glued paper used by people to mail their letters from one point to another and issued by the Postal Department of the Government to which it belongs. Take a closer look at the picture which appears upon the stamp, examine

it thoroughly. Read whatever is written on it. Then — if it be a foreign stamp — try to translate what is written, then try to see what it means, understand it, really get something out of it.

Now, interest roused, your own curiosity will do the rest.

Just what is this "rest"? Well, for one thing, it usually consists in reading up on the event depicted on the stamp which has captured your interest. At the library, if not in the rectory, you can generally get what you are looking for — facts. And, whether what is depicted be fact or legend, you can — by diligent reading — dig up the facts surrounding the *fait accompli* that you see commemorated on a small glued piece of paper.

You will read — in your encyclopedia or history book — of the backgrounds behind the event — be it person, place, or thing — brought to your attention by a closer scrutiny of what appears on a single stamp belonging to your collection. Be it large or small, no stamp collection is so barren that it does not hold some items of interest, items which well may prove of genuine profit to one who is willing to learn what they have to teach the inquisitive mind.

Primarily, a study of the stamps one sees, leads to two general studies: history and geography. Allied studies are far too numerous to mention. Among them, however, one finds such topics as the following included: Art, Science, plorations, and many others. Religion, of course, is found under-Politics, Military Conquests, Exlying all such studies.

Take the Polish commemorative stamp depicting St. Martin of Tours, astride a horse, cutting his cape in half with his sword and handing one half to a beggar who stands beside him, keeping the half remaining for his own continued use. As a picture, it is what may rightly be termed impressive. It tells a story, which proves its value. And the story — related in the Second Nocturn of the Feast of St. Martin of Tours — is one with which we are all familiar. Whether it be fact or legend it points a moral lesson expressed long ago in Holy Writ by the words: "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me." (Matt. 25: 40) It can well be applied to our sermons, employed as an effective aid to "putting it over." Since we are God's "salesmen," we ought to avail ourselves of every opening offered us, every example which might clarify what we are trying to impress upon the minds of our hearers, the souls entrusted to our priestly ministrations and pastoral zeal.

This particular hobby may prove helpful in many other ways. And, if time permits and your inclinations and interest are such, you may drive more deeply into the "story behind the story," coming to light with new, and at times

startling facts, many of them all-too-obvious had you but opened your eyes to see them.

But this, after all, is only by way of illustration. The point is, I believe, that well-taken hobbies can prove useful, engaging, and, as such, are not to be lightly tossed aside, being thought a waste of time, a possible infringement upon time which might be more profitably spent.

Of course if the time can more profitably be spent, why not spend it more profitably? If not — well, you and your congregation may profit from such a hobby as the collecting of stamps.

If, however, philately holds no appeal — well, you've a wide field to choose from; there is no end of hobbies, each with an appeal peculiarly its own: wood-carving, modeling in clay, water coloring, painting oils, sketching, wood-burning, engraving, hammering copper, beekeeping, wood-working, collecting coins, or butterflies, or flowers; and, of course, there are many outdoor activities — which might loosely be classed as hobbies though more properly sports — such as: fishing, hunting, swimming, boating, and the like.

Foolish though it may sound to say this, having a hobby may help keep you from temptation and, even, from actual sin; at the same time it might help you in your work, thus contributing towards the salvation of souls. True, we must need rely upon the supernatural, but this does not mean — and has never meant — that the natural ought to be ignored. These — what St. Thomas Aquinas terms, "the images of His effects," reflections of God, mirrorings of His Love, His Mercy, His Justice, — these it would be sinful to ignore.

Even a postage stamp — or a leaf, or a tulip, or a waterfall, or a blade of grass or any number of things we daily ignore, things so obvious we never see them — can help us to know God better, love Him more, and heap many actual benefits upon our lives and our work.

Surely, if we've the time, we must — as St. Paul strongly recommends — "redeem time," buy it back from the bondage of idleness. We have here a most precious coin, which it would be a pity — and, more than a pity, a sin — to waste.

Much more could be written on how a priest ought to spend his idle moments — despite the plethora of material already extant on the topic — and certainly will be written. Most of it, though, tends to ignore many of the natural means, probably because they are natural.

Ever seek the supernatural motive, thus supernaturalizing the natural — even extending the practice to our collecting of postage stamps. Which can, I repeat, help us avoid temptation, and profit us in our harvest of souls.

If you don't believe me, try it yourself! But don't, please, condemn me out-of-hand.

Celibacy And Its Compensations

Rev. T. C. Siekmann

A priest, already when he becomes a subdeacon, gave up the right to get married and be the father of children. This was a great sacrifice. The sexual faculty is a sacred thing, a precious natural faculty. The Church wants the priest to sacrifice the right to propagate, not because it is something unworthy of a priest, but rather because it is the greatest natural gift he has to offer. Men take great and justifiable pride in their virility. This the priest has voluntarily consecrated to God, to prove that he is willing to sacrifice even the highest natural source of satisfaction and consolation for the love of God. We all appreciate and agree with St. Paul's observation that the priest who is without wife can give himself unreservedly to the service of God. And we are all duly impressed with the many practical advantages that celibacy gives us in our work for souls. Advantages there are. There can likewise be dangers. Every priest fears that he may break down on his agreement with God. He knows, however, that if he is faithful to prayer and the sacraments, he will not break his vow. If the passing gratification of a natural faculty can be so great, what must be the eternal and lasting reward for the voluntary and generous renunciation of this pleasure! God will not be outdone in generosity. The priest knows that he is not losing out in eternity for being generous now. O God, help me to be ever faithful to my obligations of chastity, that generously giving here below, I may deserve to receive generously of the rewards of heaven.

Celibacy's Advantages

A priest in giving up the lawful gratifications of sex in marriage has also freed himself from many of the anxieties of married life. The power to propagate is a great

and sacred thing. It demands sacrifice of those who use it. A married man has to work hard to support his wife and children. In order to live without sin he has to make many other sacrifices, mortify his eyes, his thoughts, his imagination. His gratification of sex is limited to his relationship with his wife alone. There are times, too, when he must practice continence as truly as the celibate. The married man pays dearly for the lawful exercise of his sexual faculty. By one generous act the subdeacon gives up the right to sex-pleasure once and for all. From then on he is spared the constant daily struggles of married people. How difficult it must be for married people to be always faithful to their marriage promises, to live their married lives according to God's law. Some must be daily tempted to cheat on their obligations, to seek the pleasure while trying to escape the burdens. How disillusioning, too, for a man who did not voluntarily renounce sex, to find that he is bound for life to a sick or incapacitated wife, or to one scarcely compatible. How much harder his life must be than that of the consecrated celibate. If the burden of chastity bears heavily on some priest, he can rest assured that it bears even more heavily on some married men. If he thinks that being married is a cure-all for sex difficulties, he must only realize that also married people have their temptations, and many fail grievously. It is by prayer and the sacraments that married people will keep straight. It is by the same means that the priest will keep faithful to his vow of chaste celibacy. Marriage is a remedy for concupiscence, but not a magic cure-all. On the other hand, the vow of chastity, being a practice of one of the counsels, removes one of the three great difficulties to salvation and sanctification—wealth, sex, and self-will. The priest is fortunate to have all three regulated by vow, or promise, or law.

SANCTIFICATION

Our own sanctification is usually associated with that of our neighbor. To sanctify oneself and to sanctify others is a universal duty; for priests it is a strict obligation, because to them Our Lord has said: "You are the salt of the earth . . . You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden . . . let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:13, 14, 16).

quid in casu?

By Rev. William F. Allen, D.C.L.

I am pastor in a place where mixed marriages are the rule and am often confronted with the request that a non-catholic act as a sponsor at a baptism or as a witness at a marriage wherein both parties are Catholics. It is a case of a relative who expects to be honored by the occasion and the family hesitates to offend him or her lest hard feelings and greater prejudice result toward the Faith. Is there anything we can do to appease the parties?

It is forbidden and invalid to have a person, ascribed to a heretical or schismatical sect act as godparent in baptism (Can. 765, n. 2). It stands to reason that such a person could not rightly fulfill the duties assigned and therefore the non-catholic should be reasonable enough to see the point without any offense being taken. How could such a person educate, supervise or supply for the parent in the religious education of the child? However, *in praxi*, we admit that this explanation does not appeal as a solution to the case. It is more a question of keeping peace in a family and respecting the seniority or preferential status of certain members. A common solution would be to abide by Can. 764 and have but one godparent and permit the non-catholic to be aside of him in a place of honor without his name appearing on the baptismal register. It could be explained to the family that this is a place of honor but not the function and for all exterior purposes, the family problem would be solved.

In the case of marriages, particularly when it is the case of a convert who wishes a non-catholic relative to be present officially at his or her wedding, the Ordinary has the power to make an exception so as to permit a non-catholic to assist in a limited way. The non-catholic takes his place in the official cortege but a Catholic, standing nearby, fulfills the function of witness and three names appear on the marriage register. It is simply material assistance on the part of the non-catholic as in the case of baptism. It seems that this is a very common solution today in many parts of the country.

When a priest of the diocese dies, we are held to celebrate three Masses for the repose of his soul, if during life, he was a member of the Clergy Fund—a charitable fund for sick priests: the three

Masses are one of the benefits accruing to members. Is this obligation ex justitia? May the Masses of bination be offered in fulfillment?

It woud be hard to tie this obligation down to strict justice, given the circumstances of the society—one is never sure of just how many members will belong at the time of his death and there is no certain, definite exchange of quid pro quo—the conditions remain uncertain in many respects. For that reason, it is the common opinion that these obligations are not of strict justice but rather from charity and equity, and hence, the Masses of bination may be offered in their fulfillment. They do not preclude the taking of a stipend on the day of their celebration from a first Mass.[1]

1 cf. Noldin, III, n. 207 ed. 13.

As the executor for an estate, what should be my attitude toward a bill presented as yet unpaid after seven years. There is evidence that the deceased made the purchase but no evidence of payment of the debt except a presumption: he was known to be a man who faithfully paid all his debts and had good credit standing. May I benefit from the statutes of limitation in conscience?

Yes. If after a diligent search of records, there still remains a doubt, then we are not to presume bad faith on the part of the deceased particularly in this case where there was no positive credit standing. The civil law on limitations may be taken advantage of. This is a common dictum of Moralists for the benefit of heirs to an estate. It might be added that even in the case of the debtor himself, a solid common opinion presumes only negative good faith for benefitting from the statutes of limitation; that would demand the non-interference during a specified time with the creditor in the pursuance of the collection of the debt.[1]

1 cf. Prummer, Theologia Moralis, II, 1936, p. 58; Noldin, II, 407.

Is the tabernacle veil of strict necessity when the tabernacle itself is very ornate and of rich material?

The Sacred Congregation has always upheld and prescribed the strict observance of the rubric of the Ritual as regards the tabernacle veil—the conopaeum, which covers the tabernacle in the front, even if the tabernacle is made of precious material or highly ornamented. The Sacred Congregation put also aside the opinion that an inner veil replaces the outer one. When the shape of the tabernacle is such that it cannot be covered completely, then a curtain hanging in front of the door may be tolerated according to all authors.[1]

1 cf. Collins, The Church Edifice, Phil. 1936, 83.

Are all rubrics of the Missal of precept or simply given as directives for the proper fulfillment of the ceremonies of the Mass? Some claim that the prayers after Mass for the celebrant's private devotion are preceptive.

The most common opinion held among theologians and canonists is that the rubrics are divided into two classes: the *preceptivae* and the *directivae*. In the first category are all rubrics to be observed during the celebration and bind under sin; those before and after the Mass are of the directive class and per se do not involve moral fault if not followed for some reasonable cause.

I am an assistant in a parish and wish to carry on, in my own leisure moments, a study of the Scriptures. I have a very old famous text, highly recommended to me which I wish to use. It is edited by non-catholics. Must I apply to Rome for special permission to read and study the version?

If there is nothing critical and opposed to the dogmas of our Catholic Faith in the forward and annotations and if the text is entirely and faithfully rendered (even though not complete in the Catholic sense), you might take advantage of the general permission given to all students in theology or in biblical studies from Canon 1400. You should make sure of the soundness of the book from the viewpoint of faith and thus proceed. The Holy Office has competency in such matters but the rescript should be obtained through and with the permision of the Ordinary. The latter has the faculty to permit the use of such books but only in very urgent cases (Can. 1400 and 1402).

May one and the same communion serve for the fulfillment of the conditions for the gaining of many plenary indulgences on the same day? The Marian Year presents this case on Saturdays since special indulgences may be gained that day all this year.

Canon 933 answers this question in the affirmative; all other prescribed good works must be performed for each indulgence sought. It might be well to add that for the Marian Year indulgences attached to the visiting of churches, chapels etc. built in honor of the Blessed Mother the concession reads "*peccatorum venia obtenta*" and this does not mean, necessarily, sacramental confession each time as a perfect act of contrition could suffice.

When we pray for the intentions of Our Holy Father, what prayers are usually recited?

Unless definitely stated otherwise, one Pater, Ave, et Gloria suffice according to the S. Paeniteniary (Sept. 20, 1933). One exception would be the Portiuncula Indulgence for which a visit to a church and six Paters, Aves and Glorias are requested. (Vermeersch-Creusen II, 150)

Very often I am asked to baptize a new-born baby of a former parishioner who returned home for the birth and who intends to remain with her own family for a month afterwards. Must I seek permission from her proper pastor and send him the stole fee?

There is a well-founded opinion that would permit you absolute rights to the baptism if the parents cannot get to their own proper parish conveniently, and without delay. The latter condition would mean that the baptism could not take place within three to 8 days after the birth or at the latest, on the second Sunday after it. (Waldron Hospital Baptisms in the Jurist Oct. 1943, p. 587. He also cites Woywood as the source).

To what extent of sin and restitution would be held the clerk in a large department store who regularly every two weeks would steal two dollars and had done this over a period of a year and a half. He disclaims any intention of a long term theft and the money was not kept but spent as quickly as it was stolen. We have argued the case and would like to know whether there was serious sin present in the case, and if all the small thefts united finally make up a mortal sin with restitution sub gravi?

The thefts were committed against many persons since they involve a large store, a corporation. Serious matter would embrace at least the double of the absolutely serious matter for theft against a single individual and some would ask triple the amonut particularly when they have been committed against many persons and at different intervals. If in 1921, it was agreed that serious matter in the U.S. for theft was $10, today it would reach nearly $40 and the double would come somewhere between 80 and 100. In the case proposed, the sum of the thefts does not meet the double or triple asked in the case of thievery against large corporations. In connection with this, we might remark that the gravity of the theft is computed on how reasonably opposed the owner or owners would be because of the real harm inflicted upon them; and also the amount of harm done to society must be considered. It is easily seen that a sum less than one hundred dollars over a period of one year and a half could escape the stigma of serious matter.

Even though there may not have been serious sin involved, and no serious obligation of restitution, it is laudable and good pastoral guidance to insist that for sincere contrition, these thefts comes absolutely to an end, and a modicum of restitution be imposed on the delinquent for a salutary penance and remedy of soul.

For frequent Communion is it advisable to suggest that people go to confession at least once every three weeks?

Pius XII in his encylical "Mystical Body of Christ" recommends frequent confession and enumerates the many benefits to be derived from it but he does not set down any specific obligation or time limit for confession in regard to frequent communion. Spiritual writers do counsel the faithful to confess every two weeks as a help to greater spiritual perfection. The Code prescribes weekly confession for seminarians and for all religious. This is in accord with

their state in life and their quest for perfection. What to conclude then? One cannot set down any specific obligation on the subject but a monthly confession for weekly communicants and for daily communicants a twice monthly confession would not be amiss.

May flowers be placed on the table of the altar?

The Ceremonial of Bishops tells us that the proper place for flowers is between the candlesticks and authors hold that they should be placed on the gradines rather than on the table of the altar. Whenever this is not possible, then they must never be placed before the door of the tabernacle nor on top of it. They may be put on the steps of the altar as also on its sides. We must never forget that flowers are entirely subsidiary and mark a special degree of festivity but should never be permitted to rob the altar of its dignity nor of its special mark as the hallowed place of the Eternal Sacrifice.

We see many sanctuary lamps of an amber hue. Is there any law which determines that red be the color of the lamp?

The sanctuary lamp is a must and should burn night and day before the Blessed Sacrament. There may be many of them but the number should always be an odd number and not even. There is no color prescribed. Custom sanctions red among us, but in Europe it is white. The Sacred Congregation permits the lamp to be hung at the side of the altar providing that it is always within the sanctuary and to the front of the altar. It is forbidden to place it on the table of the altar or above the altar. Originally it was always suspended from the ceiling in front of the tabernacle.

May a priest carry his oil stocks with him in his automobile if he intends a long trip? It would seem that this should be permitted as a precaution for those who travel with him and for others on the road.

This question has been written in periodicals and strictly speaking the answer has always been cautious affirmative. The law demands that the Holy Oils be kept in the Church proper, in a safe and becoming place (Can. 735). It is permitted to keep them in the rectory in case of necessity or for some reasonable cause by leave of the Ordinary. It seems reasonable cause, the high incidence of accidents today, to carry the Holy Oils reverently in one's auto when a long trip is planned since the possibility of getting a priest in necessity would be small, and surely the necessity would be very urgent. It would be exceptional as a practice and thus perhaps not totally against the word *"retineat"* of the canon.

Is it more in keeping with the liturgy to buy a new Paschal Candle for each year?

We read that a new Paschal Candle need not be bought each year un-

less what remains would not suffice for the entire new Paschal season. New grains of incense however, must be blessed and inserted on each Holy Saturday.

May a patient submit to treatment by his doctor who admits the possibility of serious bodily harm therefrom?

The more desperate the patient's condition and the less effective the present remedies the stronger will be the right on the part of the patient to consent to such treatment providing the doctor has the necessary skill and experience to make the doubtful treatment and laudable. (Tisson, S.J. Human Experimentation in Medicine in the Theology Digest, 1953).

Must a mortal sin overlooked involuntarily in confession, be confessed the very next time one goes to confession?

Granting that the mortal sin is indirectly forgiven by the Power of the Keys but must be submitted nevertheless to direct absolution in a future confession, if it still comes to mind, all authors agree that the penitent does not have to confess it before going to Holy Communion. Theologians would have the sin submitted in the very next confession since the law of integrity of confessions requires all mortal sins, present in the mind of the sinner, to be included in that confession. However, it is also allowed that the usual reasons excusing from the law of integrity of the confession would easily find application in regard to this sin and its delay for confessing more easily justified.

CORRECTION, PLEASE!

Two kind readers of Quid in Casu have called our attention to an oversight in the answer on page 35 of **Pastoral Life** in the May-June issue apropos of the indult for a votive Mass in honor of the Blessed Virgin on Saturdays during the Marian Year. Corrected it thus stands: there are two distinct indults on this matter. Under the date Nov. 29, 1953, the S. C. Rites granted an indult for the universal Church for **EVERY** Saturday of the Marian Year whereby only one private votive Mass, sung or read, in honor of the Immaculate Conception, could be celebrated, servatis servandis. cf AAS. vol. 45, 819. Another indult was granted to the Hierarchy of the United States on Jan. 8, 1954 for five years whereby a single votive Mass of the Immaculate Heart of Mary could be celebrated on **the first Saturday** of every month in all churches and oratories provided some pious exercise is also held in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On a first Saturday, the two indults might be used in the same Church.

Readers are requested to propose questions or cases for solution concerning theology, canon law, liturgy and any other department of sacred science that may be of interest to the clergy.

NOT WHERE BUT HOW

It does not matter so much where I am stationed. It does matter how well I am doing the job that I have been asked to do there. It is rather usless to resent my present appointment and but tolerate it until something better comes along. In the meantime good is being left undone, and I am storing up material for judgement. God is not going to judge me on where I have been put——my bishop or superior is responsible for that. But God will judge me on the quantity and quality of service I gave there. To have a fine appointment with great prestige is not going to put me one degree higher in heaven. Nor is a less attractive appointment below my true capabilities, in itself, going to lessen my heavenly glory. What matters is how well I acquit myself of the task I have been given to do. There was a young assistant of striking personality who felt he was being wasted in the old run-down parish to which he was assigned. He sweated out his indignity, exerting himself to the minimum in working for souls in that blighted place. He was moved to the fresh air of a vigorous country parish, where he would really fit in and be able to do real work. But one day he was suddenly killed in an automobile accident and went before his Maker and Judge. All God could judge him on was the time waiting for his big chance that never came. One of the important lessons taught us by the life of the Cure' of Ars is the relative unimportance of one's appointment. Ars was not much when he arrived there, but he found plenty of work to keep him busy and ample opportunity to save souls. He certainly did not look upon his appointment to Ars as a reward for his supposed merits. In his humility he expected no honors or reward. He saw in his appointment, such as it was, a challenge. It was an opportunity. He gave it his best and made a success.

PREACHING CHRIST

As Christians we are followers of Christ, and certainly the more our people are conscious of that, the better they should become. Being a follower of Christ can mean no less than being an imitator of Christ. It is true that our people have a general notion of the life of Christ. They can tell in historical outline the main events in His life. They have a fair knowledge of His teachings, His statements, His demands. What is still lacking in so many is a deep, meditative appreciation of His virtues, His attitude toward God the Father, His treatment of sinners—in fine, a thoughtful interpretation of Our Lord's life. In our preaching there is much that we have to teach, to clarify, to exhort. De-

nunciation of sin and evil is often, however, no apt means to inspire virtue. To warn our people against sin is by no means to insure them against committing it. A safe way to inspire people to practice virtue is to hold up to imitation the person of Christ. All the world loves a hero. To know Christ is to love Him, to want to follow Him, to be associated with His way of doing things. The reason why so many Christians are careless Christians is because they do not know Christ. My preaching will be truly practical, and it will have a great chance of producing actual results, if I make known Christ to my people—not in generalities, but with all the warmth of a loving knowledge. This I myself first have to learn by prayerful meditation before I can pass it on to my people. My own prayerful study of the life of Christ will enable both me and my people to be true followers of Christ. It is axiomatic that love follows knowledge. To know Christ is to love Christ.

INVITING CONVERTS

We sometimes hear of converts saying that they would have entered the Church long before they did, only no one invited them. We can surmise that there are others who never enter the Church just because no one thought to invite them. We priests sometimes suffer from a kind of fear to invite converts. Maybe it is because some of our earlier invitations have been cooly turned down, maybe because we too readily take for granted that this man or that woman would not want to become a Catholic. Regardless of what we might be led to think, it does no harm to ask the person. Even if he refuses, he will at least know that he is welcome if he ever changes his mind, and he can help thinking all the rest of his life that he was once invited to join the Catholic Church. It may set him to thinking about and to observing things Catholic, and in due time the grace of God may make him receptive. Maybe the second time you invite him he will be willing to give it a try—even though he seemed quite definite in his first refusal. There is certainly no harm in giving anyone a prudent and friendly invitation to inquire the Catholic faith and to embrace it after an honest inquiry. No one can object to a priest's sincere desire to extend the benefits of his faith to others. Indeed people must think us pretty unconvinced of the truth of our position if we are so complacent as to let outsiders remain outsiders. We cannot expect everyone immediately to accept our invitation. Conversion to the faith is a big step, and the grace of God must move the person. But we are failing in our efforts if we do not set the scene for God's grace to act, and we are missing opportunities if we do not call people's attention to our faith. Why is it that one priest can have many converts where his predecessor had but few or none? Probably the answer is because he gave people the invitation and the opportunity to become Catholics.

Rev. T. C. Siekmann

BOOK-REVIEW Selections

OUR LADY'S LITANY, by Rev. A. Biskupek, S.V.D. Bruce. 186pp. $2.75.

For Catholics who feel it is only fitting to devote some time to learning more about the Blessed Virgin during the Marian year, Father Biskupek has done a great service. His book opens with a reference to the current centenary of the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception and a few words on the history of the famous Litany of Loreto. The author then devotes about three pages to each of the forty-nine titles under which Mary is invoked in the Litany.

The book is obviously devotional in intent and style. It does not, however, on that account deserve to be dismissed as just another compilation of highly personalized pious reflections. The author, who is a seminary professor and an active spiritual director, has synthesized in this short book a wealth of solid dogma concerning the Mother of God.

The discussion of each title of the Blessed Virgin, while intentionally and effectively inspirational, is accurately documented. Pertinent references are drawn from a great variety of sources: the Old and New Testament (half a dozen or more quotations for each title), the Councils of the Church (with handy Denziger references for busy preachers who may wish to use the book for Marian sermon material), the Doctors and Fathers of the Church, many saints, the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius Loyola, the Imitation of Christ, the liturgy of the Mass and Breviary, encyclicals of the recent popes, and even the Code of Canon Law. Where the author sees it necessary for the proper understanding of a particular title of Our Lady, he briefly explains the relevant dogma, e.g., habitual and actual grace, the priesthood of Christ, the Mystical Body, etc. Occasional historical references help to bring out the full meaning of some invocations.

Non-Catholics may find the book a pleasant avenue to the essential beliefs of the Catholic Church regarding the Blessed Virgin. Priests can find here solid sermon material, and religious and laymen, whether they are novices or masters of mental prayer, can find much inspiration for meditation.

JOHN E. NAUS, S.J.

McCARTHY AND HIS ENEMIES, by William F. Buckley, Jr. and L. Brent Bozell. H. Regnery Co. 413pp. $5.00.

In his shrewd prologue to this book Mr. William S. Schlamm declares: "Now anybody who wants

to remain an Anti-McCarthyite in good standing, and at the same time intellectually respectable, will first have to read and disprove this book."

This challenge to Senator McCarthy's enemies is justified. The two brilliant authors provide an exhaustive account of the Senator's crusade against the pro-Communists in our government. They detail the case histories of the persons accused by the Senator. They consider the principal charges leveled against him. After impartially, but penetratingly, weighing the evidence, they conclude that the Senator deserves the gratitude and support of the American people.

The authors specify various mistakes and exaggerations made by the Senator and rebuke him. But their accurate analysis of the book's vast amount of documented evidence proves that his lapses are mere specks on a painting of outstanding merit, and uncovers the false accusations, flimsy arguments, unmistable bias approaching hysteria at times, of the Senator's enemies on the printed page, the radio and the TV screen.

McCarthy's case would have been established even more forcibly if the authors had catalogued the unprecedented number of resignations from the State Department and other agencies of government which followed upon the Senator's declaration of war against pro-Communist employees. We wish, too, that the authors had itemized the more notable disastrous consequences to our country, beginning with the unbelievable arrangement for Berlin and continuing down to the refusal to win the Korean War, the shortage of ammunition during that war, and the sending of supplies to the Communists while they were slaughtering our American boys. To say that all this was intended to be in the interests of the U. S. is not just naivete'. It is stupidity. Yet when Senator McCarthy courageously and almost alone set out to eliminate the pro-Communists in the government, he found his efforts, not assisted, but actually obstructed by the Democratic administration. Will McCarthy's enemies meet the challenge of this book and thus become "intellectually respectable"?

CLARENCE MCAULIFFE, S.J.

LOUV MARTIN — AN IDEAL FATHER, by Louis and Marjorie Wust, Apostolate of the Press. $3.00.

Louis Martin, world-famed as the father of the Little Flower, is becoming more and more the subject of study. Well he might. His claim to an outstanding place in history is firmly rooted in the fact that after his wife's death on Aug. 28, 1877, Mr. Martin personally supervised the training and education of his five daughters. So perfectly did he fulfill this role that all five later became nuns and the youngest became a saint . . . indeed, the greatest saint of modern times!

It is the purpose of the co-authors of this present volume to make better known both the life and also the many virtues which Louis Martin practiced so that other fathers might be inspired in

fulfillment of their sublime vocation. Archbishop Byrne of Santa Fe, heartily endorses their plan and also approves a movement in his archdiocese to help achieve this aim.

Some may dismiss this goal lightly, saying that a man cloistered in the remote Norman hamlet of Lisieux, France, with its population of 16,000, had neither knowledge or nor experience with the many difficulties and problems which distract present day fathers from fulfillment of their prime responsibilities. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Mr. Martin was a well-versed gentleman, an extensive European traveler and a successful business man.

He has much to teach the fathers of today. And to show the background of this man who made an unsurpassed success out of his paternal vocation, the authors trace his life from youth even to the grave.

Taking the marriage of Louis and Zelie Martin as the real starting point of their study, the authors tell of the home which the newly-weds established, the birth of their nine children, Mrs. Martin's death and the other well-known events in the life of both St. Therese and her four sisters in which Mr. Martin played such an heroic role. The subject matter which the book covers is indeed inspiring and can be read with profit by all.

The authors, in fact, present a well-rounded portrait of a father who excelled all others of his generation. PAUL T. HOBAN, O. CARM.

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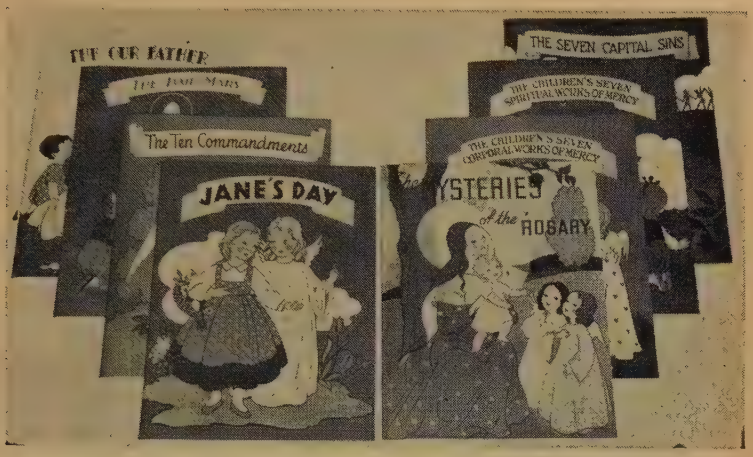
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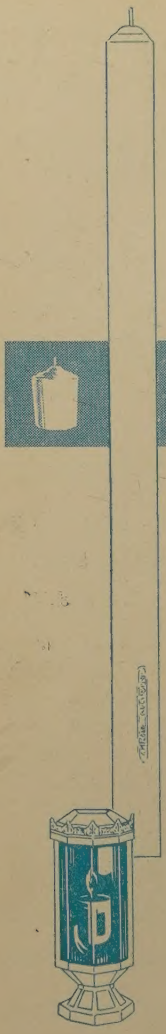

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